

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Charles Sumner Tainter, March 30, 1888, with transcript

Copy of a letter written by Dr. Bell to Mr. Tainter. March 30th, 1888. My dear Mr. Tainter:

I have just received your note of the 18th as I have only now returned from the south — also received newspaper cutting.

I cannot undertake to answer newspaper articles — but I should be glad of the opportunity of saying something publicly concerning the Graphophone — when I would give you exclusive credit for the present form of the apparatus.

I had hoped to have presented the apparatus to the notice of the Saturday Evening Club — Mr. Charles Bell objected to my saying anything upon the subject at that time — and you objected to my exhibiting the apparatus — or at least there was difficulty in my obtaining the apparatus — so nothing was done. I think Mr. Charles Bell's objection lay in the fact that he knew I would give Edison due credit for the origination of the whole subject — and he thought it inadvisable at the present time. There are two ways open. 1st I could bring the subject before the attention of the National Academy of Sciences about April 17th or the Phil. Soc. of Washington — although I am averse to doing this without a special invitation to do so on account of having pecuniary interest in the matter. 2nd I could write an article for Science or better some other Scientific periodical as I am interested in Science and might be charged with using the columns of Science for personal ends. You know how much labor it gives me to reduce ideas to paper — and I could not undertake to write anything until after the meeting of the National Academy as I have all 2 I can do in the way of preparing an important communication for the Academy upon a new subject. Best plan would be to wait until after that meeting — when I shall be happy to prepare an article upon “Phonographs and Graphophones” for publication in some scientific periodical. I should have to read up the subject to refresh my recollection. I am inclined to think that

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a written communication would be much better than a verbal communication which I could make at any time but which would certainly be incorrectly reported in some detail or other in the public press. I could not undertake to write anything without touching upon following points:

1. Edison — giving him full credit for the original apparatus — and speaking of his practical abandonment of the invention. And also the practical abandonment of the invention by the world.
2. The Volta Association. Deliberate resumption of subject by Volta Association — in common with due credit to yourself and Dr. Chichester Bell for persistent work etc.
3. The Commercial Instrument in its present condition. Exclusive credit to you for the Instrument in its present condition — and on your persevering efforts to bring it to perfection.

How does this strike you? Should be glad of suggestions.

Yours sincerely, ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL.